



# Department of Justice

Acting United States Attorney Lawrence G. Brown  
Eastern District of California

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## **MISSOURI MAN CHARGED WITH TRAVELING TO CALIFORNIA TO ENGAGE IN SEXUAL ACTIVITY WITH MINOR HE MET THROUGH XBOX LIVE**

FRESNO, Calif.—Acting United States Attorney Lawrence G. Brown announced today that a grand jury returned a two-count indictment today against EDWARD PRESTON STOUT, 27, of Richmond Heights, Mo., charging him with use of interstate commerce to entice or coerce a minor to engage in sexual activity as well as travel in interstate commerce to engage in illicit sexual activity.

This case is the result of an investigation by the Fresno Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force.

According to Assistant United States Attorney David Gappa, who is prosecuting the case, court documents reveal that STOUT developed a relationship with a 14-year-old resident of Sanger, Calif. in April 2008. He communicated with the minor while playing video games on Xbox LIVE and through MySpace accounts. They also communicated by telephone and exchanged a large volume of text messages. Eventually the communications became sexual in nature, and he sent a cell phone as a 15th birthday present so their communications could be more frequent and private, including sending sexually explicit images of themselves to each other. On January 25, 2009, STOUT drove from Missouri to California virtually nonstop for 30 hours and met the minor outside of the minor's Sanger residence. He took the minor to a local motel and engaged in criminal sexual activity.

If convicted of these charges STOUT faces a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years to a maximum sentence of life, a lifetime term of supervised release, and a \$250,000 fine. The actual sentence, however, will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables and any applicable statutory sentencing factors.

STOUT has been detained as a flight risk and danger to the community since his initial appearance in federal court on February 3, 2009. He will be arraigned on February 6, 2009, at 1:30 p.m. before the Honorable Sandra M. Snyder.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by United States Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), PSC marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit [www.projectsafefchildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafefchildhood.gov).

Charges in an indictment are only allegations, and a defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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